

Statement on Opposition in the Senate to the Nomination of Enrique Moreno

May 6, 2000

Senators Gramm and Hutchison announced yesterday that they opposed the confirmation of Enrique Moreno, my nominee for a Texas vacancy on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Their claim that he lacks the necessary experience to serve on the fifth circuit is unconscionable. The American Bar Association, which has rated judicial nominees for Republican and Democratic Presidents since the Eisenhower administration, unanimously gave Moreno their highest rating. The son of Mexican-American immigrants and a graduate of Harvard Law School, Moreno was rated one of the top three trial attorneys in El Paso by State judges.

In rejecting Moreno's candidacy, the Texas Senators have ignored the strong endorsement of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic National Bar Association, and local law enforcement officials. This is not the first time that the Texas Senators have rejected an exceptional Hispanic candidate for this seat, which has been vacant for more than 3 years. Jorge Rangel was forced to withdraw after the Texas Senators refused to allow action on his nomination. By blocking qualified judicial nominees, Gramm and Hutchison have exacerbated the vacancy crisis on the fifth circuit. Their unjustifiable opposition to Enrique Moreno—an exceptionally well-qualified Hispanic judicial nominee—must not be allowed to stand.

Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process

May 6, 2000

I want to join Prime Ministers Blair and Ahern in welcoming the IRA's commitment to initiate a process that will completely and verifiably put arms beyond use and its decision to resume contact with the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning. This is a significant step toward realizing the full promise of the Good Friday ac-

cord. I urge the loyalist paramilitaries to do the same.

I express appreciation to Martti Ahtisaari and Cyril Ramaphosa for their willingness to take part in confidence-building measures involving third party inspection of IRA weapons dumps. I have great confidence in their ability to contribute to this important task.

These developments offer renewed hope to the people of Northern Ireland that politics will once and for all be pursued through exclusively political means. The United States remains ready to assist this process in any way we can.

NOTE: In his statement, the President referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; former President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland; and former Secretary-General Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa's African National Congress.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Little Rock, Arkansas

May 7, 2000

Thank you very much. Vic, thank you for being here. Marion, thank you for being here. Vic Snyder was one of the bravest people in the Arkansas State Senate when I was Governor. When he ran for Congress, I told Hillary, I said, "I'm afraid he can't get elected. He's got too much guts. He'll say what he thinks about everything." But he got elected, and he got reelected. And I thank—when Marion Berry ran for Congress after doing a stint in our administration in the Agriculture Department, Dale and David and I really felt that he was entitled to be in Congress, almost as a conciliation prize for having hosted us at the coon supper in Gillette all those years. Anybody who could get us to eat coon for 10 or 15 years in a row should be given a seat in Congress, just as a matter, of course. But I thank them so much.

The other night when I was home, a couple of weeks ago—or maybe it was last week—to dedicate the law school here to Bill Bowen and to do the event in honor of our friend, Daisy Bates, Dale and David and I went to dinner alone, just the three of us. And we needed adult supervision. [*Laughter*]